means at its disposal and calls on the peoples of Europe to joint action in favor of peace. . . . We address ourselves to our brothers, workers of the German-Austrian coalition. . . . We shall firmly defend our freedom against any reactionary assault from within and without. The Russian Revolution will not retreat in the face of bayonets and will not yield to foreign military power. But we call [on the peoples of Austria and Germany] to break the yoke of their half-despotic governments, as the people of Russia have broken the yoke of Tsarism. Refuse to serve as a tool of conquest and oppression in the hands of your kings, landowners and bankers, and together we will put an end to the war, that terrible carnage, the disgrace of mankind, that darkens the bright days of the birth of freedom in Russia.

The foreign policy proclaimed in this message was unacceptable to the Provisional Government. However, the Petrograd Soviet, like any other organization, was entitled to proclaim its view on the war without interfering with the affairs of the government.

In general, diarchy consisted not in this or that act of the Soviet but in the fact that it had more prestige and more power than the government. The conservative press stressed the fundamental difference between the government and the Soviet. The first represented the nation as a whole, while the latter was a "private organization." Yet this "private organization" was elected by many hundred thousands of workers and soldiers and commanded their loyalty, while the government's power rested on the agreement between the Duma Committee and this private organization. It could not remain in power without the latter's active support.

This was one of the most serious problems confronting the Petrograd Soviet and its Executive Committee. We could not compel the masses of workers and soldiers to trust such members of the Provisional Government as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Miliukov, or the War Minister, Guchkov. We could only assure the people that we supported the government on the basis of the agreed program and would support it so long as the government honored its commitments. But the conservatives were not satisfied with this conditional support. Their aim was to eliminate the elected councils (Soviets) from public life, and they were confident that the people, deprived of the advice of their representatives, would sooner or later turn to them and learn to consider them as rulers of the country.

The irony of the situation was that the democratic forces represented in the Soviets were fully responsible for the weakness of the Provisional Government. They had weakened it not by interfering with its activities but by declining to participate in it in the early days of the revolution. They might have corrected this mistake by taking